

JAN 27 1938

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TRANSACTIONS

OF THE

SAN DIEGO SOCIETY OF NATURAL HISTORY

VOL. VIII, No. 32, pp. 409-410

JANUARY 18, 1938

A NEW MUSKRAT FROM UTAH

BY

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Among the mammals collected by the writer on an expedition for the San Diego Society of Natural History in southwestern Utah during the summer of 1937 is an apparently unnamed form of muskrat.

In the absence of sufficient material at hand for adequate comparison, the skulls of the muskrats secured were forwarded to Major E. A. Goldman of the Bureau of Biological Survey, Washington, D. C., where needed comparative specimens from the national collections were available. Through his kindness a number of comparisons were made and reported to the writer.

It is with pleasure that the animal is named in Major Goldman's honor as

Ondatra zibethica goldmani subsp. nov.

VIRGIN VALLEY MUSKRAT

Type.—From Saint George, Washington County, Utah; no. 12915, collection of the San Diego Society of Natural History; adult female; collected by Laurence M. Huey, August 11, 1937.

Characters.—A race of *Ondatra zibethica* larger in size than either *Ondatra zibethica pallida* or *O. z. bernardi* of the Colorado River drainage system in Arizona, and smaller than *O. z. mergens* of the Great Basin region in northwestern Nevada and northeastern California. In color, *O. z. goldmani* is somewhat similar to *O. z. bernardi* but has a heavier coating of guard hairs dorsally. Compared with *O. z. pallida*, *goldmani* is lighter in color; in fact *pallida*, despite its name, is the darkest of the three forms found along the lower Colorado River

drainage system. Compared with *O. z. mergens*, *goldmani* is somewhat paler and more uniformly light brown. Cranially, *goldmani* differs from *mergens* in having a relatively narrower, less massive skull; braincase decidedly narrower; lambdoid crest narrower, less flaring and upturned; interparietal narrower; premaxillae wider at fronto-maxillary suture; basi-occipital narrower; auditory bullae more inflated laterally. Compared with *bernardi*, *goldmani* has a relatively narrower, more elongated skull, with interparietal larger and longer, that is to say more extended antero-posteriorly. The bullae are distinctly larger and more fully inflated. Compared with *pallida*, *goldmani* has a relatively more elongated skull with a more slender rostrum. The interparietal differs as it does from that of *bernardi*, the zygomatic arches are more arched and the audital bullae more inflated.

Color and Measurements of Type.—Dorsally uniform Dresden Brown,¹ slightly darker on nose and rump, shading to lighter on sides and underparts. Tail thinly fringed on dorsal and ventral ridges, with dark, nearly black, hairs. Feet thinly covered dorsally with lighter-colored hairs. Vibrissae black. Total length, 502; tail, 215; hind foot, 76; ear, 17. *Skull*: greatest length, 59.6; zygomatic breadth, 36.9; nasals, 19.6; tooth row, 14.8.

Range.—Probably limited to the riparian association along the Virgin River in southwestern Utah, from near Zion National Park westward at least to Saint George and perhaps farther westward along the course of the Virgin River into the extreme northwestern tip of Arizona and southeastern Nevada.

Specimens examined by the writer.—*Ondatra zibethica mergens*: 1 from Eagle Lake, Lassen County, California. *Ondatra zibethica pallida*:² 24 from Camp Verde, Yavapai County, Arizona (type locality). *Ondatra zibethica bernardi*:² 9 from 4 miles south of Gadsden, Yuma County, Arizona (type locality). *Ondatra zibethica goldmani*: 7 from Saint George, Washington County, Utah (type locality).

¹ Ridgway, Color Standards and Color Nomenclature, 1912.

² From collection of Bernard Bailey.